/217 cont./

682 to show the difference between them.

Thus, one who kills or wounds an opponent in the course of an open fight on equal terms (the Sarakatsani say "as is suitable for courageous men") is not prosecuted. However, if the victim is killed or wounded in 682 an unexpected attack, the murderer is exposed to blood vengeance. "the 627 blood of the dead one must be paid with blood," the Sarakatsani say. 628

It seems that if homicide in an open struggle is not punished it is because the victim has had the means to defend himself--a conception similar to the one which justifies the duel.

As for blood vengeance, its justification resides in definite social realities arising from family structure and the social life of the Sarakatsani in general.

Vengeance demands that the murderer be killed by the kinsmen of his victim. Yet the matter is not considered closed by the punishment of the guilty one. For the kinsmen of the latter must retaliate with other murders. Thus a vicious circle, that of the "vendetta," which may go on for years with many deaths on both sides is entered. It really seems that while the Sarakatsani proclaim respect for life, they forget this rule when faced with homicide, and thereupon act in a contrary manner. This is an apparently contradictory situation which may lead one to question the actual existence of this rule.

In order to understand this phenomenon it is suitable to cite two very significant cases of vendetta:

627 --Before the last world war a vendetta between two important 628 lineages from Tchépélovo in Epirus, the Tzoumanis and the Koumbis, lasted 612 several years and claimed eleven victims. In view of this situation which [581] seemed insoluable, the head, N. Tzoumanis, had the sagacity to arrange a marriage between one of his nieces and a Koumbis son. The vendetta ended forthwith.

682 627 --A young man from the region of Pélasghia (Stérea Hellas) recently

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682 627 killed another from there; he was arrested and condemned by the assizes of Lamia to 12 years in prison. Everybody now knows that at the end of his sentence he will be killed by the kinsmen of his victim.

[628] [602] It is appropriate to recall here the rule according to which the vendetta is not practiced when the victim and the murderer are kinsmen.

682 627 628 182 /218/ Combining these facts, we may conclude that the vendetta is not viewed merely or strictly speaking as punishment of a crime. Otherwise the kinsmen of the victim cited in our second example would not be ready to kill the culprit who had already been condemned by the law. Moreover, once the culprit is executed, and justice has therefore been done, there would be no reason for retaliation by his kinsmen. It is thus obvious that the vendetta has another purpose. It is that of re-establishing the social equilibrium, temporarily upset by the murder.

602 682 627 628 182 In the course of our study of the functions of kinship we pointed out that the "others," the non-relatives, represent virtual enemies, that therefore the family must seek at all costs to strengthen itself by enlarging the circle of kinship. By depriving it of one of its members, the murderer diminishes the family of the victim, whereas that of the culprit becomes stronger. This implies that until the moment of the crime the respective family groups are considered equal, which is no longer the case after the crime. The family of the victim must then seek to neutralize the dangerous excess number of the opposing family by diminishing it in proportion. But then the latter in turn regards itself in a bad situation. And vengeance begins all over again.

602 682 627 581 182 These assertions are corroborated by the way in which the vendetta mentioned in our first example was terminated. The Tzoumanis family gave one of its members to the Koumbis family. This exchange of individuals, by means of marriage, reestablished the equilibrium, this time positively. They /these assertions/ are likewise corroborated by the prohibition of vengeance between relatives. The family, already weakened by a homicide, must not be further weakened by new murders. (33)

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33. The same idea is to be found in antiquity: G. Glotz: La solidarité, p. 47-48.

Thus, there is no contradiction between the vendetta and the prohibition of homicide. If the execution of the murderer is avenged in turn that is because another principle comes into play, that of safeguarding at all costs the moral and social integrity of the family. The necessity to abide by this principle is so over whelming that the prohibition of homicide yields to it in the end.

It is true that this arrangement is not the most fortunate. However, it reflects very well the relations between the individual and /219/ the group, or rather the individual and the family, the choice in the final analysis being in favor of the group.

Moreover, there is no reason to assume that the vendetta presupposes a collective responsibility of the family groups in case of homicide: first, because they usually seek to kill the murderer himself; second, if they kill instead one of his close relatives, which is not unusual, this is not because they consider him co-responsible, but in order to weaken the family. That is why, furthermore they then choose the best, the most distinguished, the strongest.

As to the application of the vendetta, there is no procedure provided to judge the affair and to pronounce a verdict. Custom, known beforehand by all, is followed.

Carrying out the vendetta is the responsibility chiefly of the young men of the family. The women are excluded from it both as victims and executers.

Sentimental and sexual relations outside marriage.

Sarakatsani society disapproves strongly of sentimental and sexual relations outside marriage.

A statement based on Sarakatsani ideology is very indicative in this respect. According to it, cases of this kind never occur among them, as